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**CIRM TO HOST INTERNATIONAL STEM CELL FORUM
ANNUAL MEETING IN SAN FRANCISCO**

- Gathering of 19 Member Nations To Take Place February 26-27 -

San Francisco, Calif. February 15, 2008 – An international gathering of the world's leading agencies involved in funding stem cell research will take place in San Francisco, California when the International Stem Cell Forum (ISCF) convenes on February 26-27 for its 6th Annual Meeting. The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) is host of this year's meeting. CIRM is a member of ISCF along with 20 other organizations representing 19 nations that conduct stem cell research.

The International Stem Cell Forum Annual Meeting brings together its members for scientific updates and discussions on current ISCF initiatives including characterizing and providing a registry of human embryonic stem cell lines and drawing up an ethical landscape resource of global stem cell research.

"Californians can be proud to host 19 nations in this prestigious gathering of international stem cell research funding organizations" stated Robert Klein, chairman of the governing board of the CIRM. "Because of Proposition 71, California is providing global leadership in stem cell research. California's role in driving the "stem cell revolution" in medical science, in partnership with the leading nations of the world, brings tremendous hope for the development of therapies and cures for the millions of children and adults in California and elsewhere who suffer from devastating diseases or injuries."

Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, chief executive of the Medical Research Council (UK) and chair of the International Stem Cell Forum said "International co-operation in the field of stem cell research is of fundamental importance. The growth of the Forum over the last five years shows that the international community increasingly recognises that through collaboration, we will be able to harness the potential of stem cells as quickly as possible to benefit human health. At the same time, by working together we can take account of the ethical questions that surround this field of research. We are pleased that the meeting is being held in California, which is seen globally as an important leader and powerhouse in stem cell research."

"The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine is delighted to host this year's ISCF meeting" sated Alan O. Trounson, president of CIRM. "International collaboration is crucially important to advancing the field of stem cell research. The opportunity to bring this group of leading funders to California is an important opportunity to learn from each other and discuss ways to move the entire field of stem cell research forward toward therapies and cures."



The International Stem Cell Forum is comprised of the following members:

- Academy of Finland
- Australian National Health and Medical Research Council
- California Institute for Regenerative Medicine
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Chinese Academy of Sciences
- Czech Science Foundation
- Danish Center for Stem Cell Research
- Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (Germany)
- INSERM (France)
- Israel Academy of Science and Humanities
- Italian National Institute of Health
- Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
- Medical Research Council (UK)
- National Institutes of Health
- Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development
- RIKEN (Japan)
- Singapore's Biomedical Research Council
- Korean Stem Cell Research Center
- Instituto de Salud Carlos III (Spain)
- Swedish Research Council
- Swiss National Science Foundation

About the International Stem Cell Forum (ISCF) The International Stem Cell Forum (ISCF) is made up of 21 funders of stem cell research from around the world. It was founded in January 2003 to encourage international collaboration and funding support for stem cell research, with the overall aim of promoting global good practice and accelerating progress in this vitally important area of biomedical science. The Forum's long-term aim is to help stem cell scientists achieve a range of revolutionary medical advances that will benefit people throughout the world.

About CIRM CIRM was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 156 research grants totaling almost \$260 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit www.cirm.ca.gov.